DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 046 605 RC 005 020

TITLE	Information Concerning the Washoe County Indian Community.
INSTITUTION	Nevada Univ., Reno. Coll. of Education.
REPORT NO	R-2
PUB DATE	69
NOTE	15p.
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS	*American Indians, Dropouts, *Educational Needs, *Employment Level, Family Income, *Population Trends, Residential Patterns, *Student Enrollment, Tables (Data)
IDENTIFIERS	*Nevada

ABSTRACT

Information relative to Indian residents of Washoe County, Nevada, has been developed to provide an analysis of educational and employment needs. Population figures are presented by age and sex for 3 basic Indian residence groups in the county. Statistics are presented in tabular form for Indian student enrollment in area schools, income level of Indian families living on Federal lands, and Indian families on welfare from 2 Federally-owned land areas. Employment statistics indicate a serious need to provide marketable skills for Indians in these 2 areas. It is noted that Indian students with school attendance problems or who drop out of school generally come from families with low income, seasonal employment, or other social problems. The study points up that informational gaps exist relative to employment status, education, and attitudes of the Indian population. (JH)

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INFORMATION CONCERNING THE

WASHOE COUNTY INDIAN COMMUNITY

REPORT NO. 2

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1969

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RC 005020

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INFORMATION CONCERNING THE WASHOE COUNTY INDIAN COMMUNITY

Acknowledgments

The following people were very helpful in providing information concerning this report.

Mr. Jack Abbott, Supervisor, Welfare Division, Nevada State Department of Health, Welfare, and Rehabilitation

Mr. Glenn A. Duncan, Jr., Attendance Officer, Washoe County School District

Reverend Clyde H. Mathews, Jr.

Mr. Eddie A. Palmanteer, Jr., Tribal Operations Officer, Nevada Indian Agency

Mr. Charles B. Robinson, Principal, Fernley Public Schools

Mrs. Gretchen C. Tobey, Secretary, Tribal Operations Office, Nevada Indian Agency

Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada

Some Information Relative to the Indian Population

The original purpose of this total study was to attempt to provide an analysis of the educational and employment needs of the Washoe County Negro community. However, at the request of the Board of Trustees of the Washoe County School District, this section of information relative to the Indian residents of Washoe County has been developed and included.

It is most interesting to attempt a study of the Indians of Washoe county, Nevada, in regard to their number, employment status, and educational needs, as each source of information is at variance with every other source. Additionally, births, deaths, and movements of families and individuals constantly change basic data. All data used in this study, other than estimates, were correct as of October, 1968; and for the purpose of minimal descriptive analysis should be sufficiently accurate.

Three basic residence groups have developed among the Indian people of Washoe County. Two of these groups are readily identified, those who live in the Pyramid Lake area and those who live in the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony. However, there are several hundred other Indians who are integrated with the general communities of Reno and Sparks. This third group is extremely difficult to identify and it is therefore difficult to estimate with accuracy their number, income, and educational needs. Coupled with the difficulty of attempting to study the three distinct residence groups is the problem of mobility into and out of each of these groups to either one of the other Washoe County groups or to a residence outside of the boundaries of Washoe County.

The Indian Population of Washoe County

Tables 1, 2, and 3 reveal the population data for the Indian residents of Washoe County as divided into the three residence categories indicated above. The figures in

Table 1 are based on a house to house census conducted in the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony in 1966 by Mr. Jack Abbott with adjustments which were required by consideration of the Indian children census of the Washoe County School District for the 1968-69 school year and information derived from the Tribal Operations Office of the Nevada Indian Agency.

TABLE NO. 1

INDIAN RESIDENTS OF THE RENO-SPARKS INDIAN COLONY
BY AGE AND SEX

	AGES								TOTALS
	1 day to 5 yrs.	5-18	19-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	56-65	Over 65	
MALE	27	94	38	35	29	19	13	11	266
FEMALE	34	81	35	39	27	16	16	11	259
TOTALS	61	175	73	74	56	35	29	22	525

The information in Table 2 is derived from census rolls in the Tribal Operations Office of the Nevada Indian Agency wherein adult tribal members are listed, the census of Indian children attending schools in Washoe County and the Fernley Schools of Lyon County, and an estimate of the number of males and females under the age of five years.

TABLE NO. 2

INDIAN RESIDENTS OF PYRAMID LAKE AREA OF WASHOE COUNTY

	← AGES →								TOTALS
	1 day to 5 yrs.	5-18	19-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	56-65	Over 65	
MALE	34*	65	18	27	19	15	13	12	203
FEMALE	31*	61	16	23	16	14	19	19	199
TOTALS	65	126	34	50	35	29	32	31	402

*Estimates

Table 3 is based on accurate figures for school age children living in private residences in the Truckee Meadows, but outside of the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony and estimates of the population above and below school age as they relate to the other Indian populations. It seems safe to assume that there are very few or no Indians over 65 years of age living outside of federally owned land, inasmuch as members of this group usually have no income other than that derived from federal land or welfare; however, this does not totally exclude the possibility of a very small number of Indians over 65 who might be living with sons or daughters not on reservation lands. For the purpose of simplicity, Table 3 shows an estimate of zero in the age category "over 65", as this study is not relative to those individuals who are of retirement age.

TABLE NO. 3

ESTIMATES OF INDIAN RESIDENTS OF THE RENO-SPARKS AREA
LIVING IN PRIVATE RESIDENCES

	AGES				TOTALS
	1 day - 5 yrs	5-18	19-65	Over 65	
MALE	47	131	175	0	353
FEMALE	45	130	167	0	342
TOTALS	92	261*	342	0	695

*Actual

In considering the above three tables which deal with the Indian population of Washoe County by age and sex, it is necessary to keep in mind that such data change. Such changes in data are significantly affected by differences in basic census data, births, deaths, and mobility of the population. Therefore, none of the figures within the above tables should be considered as specific when this report is finally distributed. The real significance of these figures as they relate to this report is the fact that of the approximately 1,622 Indians now residing within Washoe County, 780 are eighteen years of age or under. This would indicate that approximately 48 percent of the total Indian population is not presently in serious competition for jobs in the immediate area. It also indicates that consideration must be given to training

these young Indians in order to give them entry level skills into the labor force or institutions of higher learning.

Employment Status of Indians

The employment status of Indians living in Washoe County is difficult to assess because of the large number of Indians who do not live on federally owned land or within an identifiable geographic region, and therefore cannot readily be isolated in a single survey. It would seem sufficient to say that those Indians who own or rent private residences in various parts of Reno and Sparks must have an income significantly higher than that reported for reservation Indians in Table 4, otherwise they would probably not have the earning power to settle independently outside of federal lands. Informal interviews and emperical observation would lead to the conclusion that adult Indians who live away from federally owned land are skilled workers, usually in the construction trades or the trucking industry, although there are others in such occupations as retailing, gaming, nursing, and hairdressing.

Table 4 indicates the level of average income per family for those Indians living on federal lands in Washoe County. The range of incomes for those living on the Pyramid Lake Indian Reservation is not readily discernable because of seasonal employment and the fact that such information has not been accurately developed.

However, by the census count of Mr. Jack Abbott in 1966, the range of earned family income at the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony is from a low of zero to a high of $12,000 per year.

TABLE NO. 4

INCOME LEVEL OF INDIAN FAMILIES LIVING ON FEDERAL LANDS

FEDERAL LAND	NUMBER OF FAMILIES	INCOME FROM RESERVATION SOURCES	INCOME FROM PERSONAL EMPLOYMENT	GROSS INCOME	AVERAGE INCOME PER FAMILY
Pyramid Lake	87	$46,000	$26,000	$306,000	$ 3,517
Reno-Sparks Indian Colony	98	0	$446,300	$446,000	$ 4,551

Table 5 indicates the number of Indians on welfare at the two federally owned land areas. This table would indicate a serious need to provide Indians in these two areas with marketable skills which would allow them to leave the welfare rolls. Of the total population of the Pyramid Lake Reservation, approximately 25 percent receive welfare assistance, and while the situation at the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony is somewhat better, a welfare population of over 17 percent of the total Colony is certainly not beneficial to the Indian minority or the total community.

TABLE NO. 5

WELFARE CASES OF INDIAN FAMILIES LIVING
ON FEDERAL LANDS

FEDERAL LAND	GENERAL ASSISTANCE		OTHER ASSISTANCE		TOTAL INDIVIDUALS
	Number of Cases	Number of Persons	Number of Cases	Number of Persons	
Pyramid Lake	14	41	35	60	101
Reno-Sparks Indian Colony	13	30	35	60	90

School Attendance and Dropouts

Tables 6 and 9 indicate the number of Indian children from the Reno-Sparks area who were enrolled in the public schools of Washoe County at the time of federal and minority surveys in October, 1968, and February, 1969. Tables 7 and 8 indicate school attendance of Indian children at Pyramid Lake in the Natchez School and those from the Pyramid Lake-Wadsworth area attending school at Fernley in Lyon County.

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TABLE NO. 6

INDIAN CHILDREN OF THE RENO-SPARKS INDIAN COLONY
ATTENDING PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN THE TRUCKEE MEADOWS

	AGES			TOTALS
	5-12	13-18	19-21	
MALE	55	37	2	94
FEMALE	44	34	1	79
TOTALS	99	71	3	173

TABLE NO. 7

INDIAN CHILDREN OF THE WADSWORTH-NIXON AREA OF WASHOE COUNTY
ATTENDING THE NATCHEZ SCHOOL AT NIXON, WASHOE COUNTY

	AGES			TOTALS
	5-12	13-18	19-21	
MALE	33	0	0	33
FEMALE	31	0	0	31
TOTALS	64	0	0	64

TABLE NO. 8

INDIAN CHILDREN OF THE WADSWORTH-NIXON AREA
OF WASHOE COUNTY ATTENDING SCHOOL IN FERNLEY PUBLIC SCHOOL, LYON COUNTY

	AGES			TOTALS
	5-12	13-18	19-21	
MALE	8	24	1	33
FEMALE	13	17	0	30
TOTALS	21	41	1	63

TABLE NO. 9

INDIAN CHILDREN LIVING IN PRIVATE RESIDENCES
AND ATTENDING SCHOOL IN THE RENO-SPARKS AREA

	AGES			TOTALS
	5-12	13-18	19-21	
MALE	93	38	1	132
FEMALE	96	34	1	131
TOTALS	189	72	2	263

In addition to the above figures there are fifteen Indian children who left school prior to the October, 1968 survey. Thirteen of these fifteen were in grades

9, 10, 11, and 12, and if they had been included in an overall dropout rate for Indian students of high school age in Washoe County, the rate would be 21.359 percent, which is roughly twice the total dropout rate for all of the students of Washoe County. It should also be noted that Indian students who withdraw from the school to move to a residence outside of Washoe County are not considered dropouts, although there is some evidence that at least a few of them do not enroll in another school.

In studying the known dropout rolls, there would seem to be no indication of a special pattern as one might relate to areas of residence. The limited number of dropout cases available for study would seem to indicate that the number of dropouts are about evenly divided between those students who live on federally owned land and those who reside in private residences.

Indian students who drop out of school or have special problems relative to school attendance generally come from homes with one or more of the following social problems: low income, seasonal employment, divorce or separation, crowded living conditions, lack of utilities, drinking and gambling. It should also be noted that children living in traditional Indian homes are often hampered by apathy and lack of encouragement.

Conclusions

This rather meager study reveals some interesting information relative to the population, employment status, and school attendance of the Indians of Washoe County.

However, the limited scope of such a study has its greatest value in pointing up the numerous informational gaps relative to the total employment status, education, and attitudes of the Indian population. It is hoped that concerned agencies and institutions will give consideration to these informational gaps and establish a high priority status for a future, in-depth study of the Indian minority of Washoe County, Nevada.